

## **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding Info Sheet**

### **Culturally Specific Victim Services Grant Program**

This sheet will be useful for any organization not familiar with VOCA and/or who has not previously received VOCA funds from the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA).

#### **About MOVA**

MOVA is an independent state agency governed by the Victim and Witness Assistance Board. MOVA strives to advance victim rights by ensuring all victims and survivors of crime across the Commonwealth are supported and empowered through access to high-quality services that are trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and reflective of diverse communities. MOVA achieves this through survivor-informed work, advocacy for enhanced victim rights and services, partnerships with agencies and individuals, and a commitment to providing funding and services for underserved and marginalized communities.

#### **About VOCA**

VOCA stands for “Victims of Crime Act.” The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) was passed by Congress in 1984, establishing the Crime Victims Fund (CVF). Millions of dollars are deposited annually into the fund from criminal fines and penalties collected by the federal government. CVF dollars don’t come from taxpayers. They come from people or corporations convicted of federal crimes. MOVA is the state office to administer and award VOCA funds to local programs and government agencies.

#### **Who is Eligible to Apply for VOCA Funding in Massachusetts?**

Individual grant opportunities will outline eligibility requirements, timelines, and instructions on how to complete the application process. For the Culturally Specific Victim Services in Western Massachusetts grant funding opportunity, eligible programs must be community-based culturally specific programs, are led by and created for the primary purpose of providing culturally specific services to one or more communities of color in Western Massachusetts (specifically Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire Counties), have not previously received VOCA funding, and must have an organizational mission primarily focused on one or more communities of color.

As stated in the [VOCA Rule](#) § 94.111, eligible applicants are those that:

- Are operated by a nonprofit organization (including tribes)
- Provide services to victims of crime
  - Note: direct victim services do not need to be the only thing your organization does, but it is the only part of your work that can be funded with VOCA dollars
- Can demonstrate a history of providing services to victims of crime
- Have financial support from other sources
- Can demonstrate the organizational capacity to provide the proposed services

#### **What Types of Services Will VOCA Support?**

You might not define your services as “victim services,” but if you are providing the types of support, healing and assistance to individuals who have suffered harm because of a crime—as mentioned in the section above—then you are likely considered a service provider and your services are likely eligible victim services.

This document references “victims” and “survivors”. MOVA understands that not all individuals identify or define themselves with these words. Individuals are **not** required to report the crime to law enforcement or participate in the criminal legal system to be eligible for services.

Services provided due to crime must be free of charge. Participant income or financial resources may not be considered when determining eligibility for services. The following is a list of some of the services, activities and costs that are considered eligible for support with VOCA funds:

- Crisis counseling, personal advocacy, and emotional support
- Follow-up contacts
- Group treatment and support
- Crisis hotlines
- Emergency supports and safety measures
- Services that help the victim navigate the criminal justice system
- Therapy, mental health counseling and care
- Legal assistance for victims
- Peer-support
- Culturally specific services
- Staff training
- Outreach
- Assistance in filing victim compensation
- Relocation & housing for victims
- Transitional housing

## What Types of Services Are Unallowable?

The following list of services, activities and costs **cannot** be supported with VOCA grant funds or matching contributions (either cash or in-kind):

- Lobbying and fundraising Activities
- Perpetrator rehabilitation
- Activities that seek to improve the criminal justice system
- Activities exclusively related to crime prevention
- Out-of-pocket crime victim expenses
- Most medical costs

## What Types of Crime Survivors Are Eligible?

All victims of crime (including victims of federal crimes) are eligible for services. Note: if you are serving undocumented populations, you can provide VOCA-funded assistance.

## How to Apply for VOCA Funding in Massachusetts

To learn about VOCA funding opportunities, please visit [MOVA's website](#). This is where information can be found for MOVA's grant opportunities. MOVA's grant opportunities can also be found on [COMMBUYS](#), Massachusetts's official procurement system.

## Grant Recipient Requirements

If you are awarded a grant, you will need to track several items including how you are spending the money, who you are serving, and what services you are providing. You will be required to report this information to MOVA during the grant period. MOVA will provide detailed guidance and training for grant recipients.

### *Budgets and Expenditure Reports*

Once the grant period begins, you will submit expenditure reports to MOVA monthly. Expenditure reports outline the costs you have spent during a particular month and will include backup documents (i.e., receipts) to support the costs requested for reimbursement. Although all costs reimbursed must be included in your budget, there are opportunities throughout the year to update the budget via an amendment if need be.

### *Monitoring*

MOVA will conduct monitoring site visits with all grant recipients throughout the course of the contract. Site visits seek to ensure that grant recipients are following all MOVA, state and federal requirements connected to the grant award.

### *Data Tracking and Submission*

All grant recipients are required to report performance data to MOVA on a quarterly basis. Reporting forms and guidance will be provided. Data can include, but is not limited to, demographic data of clients served, victimization and service delivery information.

Please note that the requirements above are just a snapshot of MOVA's procedures and more information can be found in the [VOCA Policies & Procedures](#) on [MOVA's website](#). You may e-mail any questions to [MOVA@mass.gov](mailto:MOVA@mass.gov) or call MOVA's main line at 617.586.1340